

THE RURAL REPOSITORY.



DEVOTED TO POLITE LITERATURE, SUCH AS MORAL AND SENTIMENTAL TALES, ORIGINAL COMMUNICATIONS, BIOGRAPHY, TRAVELING SKETCHES, AMUSING MISCELLANY, HUMOROUS AND HISTORICAL ANECDOTES, POETRY, &c.

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NO. 3.

SELECT TALES.

Prize Tale.—From the New-England Galaxy.

May Martin, or the Money Diggers.

A GREEN MOUNTAIN TALE,

BY D. P. THOMPSON OF MONTPELIER, VT.

[Continued.]

We will now follow the eager eyed expectants of glittering treasure to the theatre of their secret operations in the woods. A company of five individuals, besides Martin and Gow, had already been formed according to the plan before mentioned, and many nights had been spent by them in making excavations on the spot indicated by their leader, who generally remained with them several hours each night in directing their movements, before he retired to his retreat on the mountain, where he had now for the most part taken up his quarters. For the first few nights of their digging he had directed their efforts to different places within a circle of ten rods in diameter, designated by certain marks on the trees, and constituting a boundary within which, he told them, he had rendered it certain by views he had obtained in his magic stone, and the working of the divining rods that the money lay buried. But for several of the last nights he had ordered them to proceed on in excavating in the same vein, assuring them that they might depend on having centered on the right place, and to so great a certainty was this now reduced, as his stone and often tried rods informed him, that he could safely promise them that a few more nights labor would bring them to the treasure. And such being the case he called on each man to have the bonus to be paid him on reaching the first dollar, in readiness, at the same time declining assisting them any further till they severally complied with this indispensable requisition. This, for several days, caused a suspension of their labors; for it required no small exertions on the part of the company generally, and many sacrifices on the part of some of them to raise, at that day, the necessary sum. But their exertions and sacrifices great as they were, in some cases, were

cheerfully, and even anxiously made in the fancied certainty of soon being a thousand fold repaid in the glittering harvest which they were about to reap. Farms were unhesitatingly mortgaged to distant money lenders, oxen and horses, the only ones possessed by their owners, were sold at reduced prices, and all kinds of property were disposed of or pledged for a tithe of its value, to meet the exigency. And so great was their activity that before one week had elapsed, every man of the company had reported himself to his leader as prepared with his hundred dollars in his pocket, and eagerly demanded to be again led to the work.

Hitherto the enterprise had been conducted with so much caution and secrecy that little was known in the neighborhood except by those immediately concerned, of its existence, and much less of the object for which the company was formed. But either by reason of the stir created by raising the money, or because the growing certainty of success had rendered the different members of the association less guarded, vague rumors were beginning to be afloat in the neighborhood that some uncommon adventure was going on in the mountains; and many were the conjectures and dark surmises made concerning the character and object—the secrecy with which it had been conducted sufficing to throw an air of mystery and romance over the proceeding. And this had been considerably increased by the appearance about this time, of a singularly accoutered old man, who had been known to enter the settlement from the north, and was several times afterwards seen hovering round the outskirts of the woods, back of which was the supposed scene of these mysterious operations—some supposing him a dumb maniac, from having been met and hailed without returning any answer or showing the least sign of hearing or recognizing the presence of another. Some believing him the devil himself come to superintend the ceremonies of the black art which they suspected was in performance in the woods, and others, more given to matter of fact calculations, and disposed to view se-

crecy and mystery, as generally the cloak of iniquity, shrewdly suspected him to be an agent sent from Stephen Burrough's *Snag-Factory* in Canada, to establish a branch in this unexposed part of the Green Mountains.* And it was the impression of all indeed that this strange personage had some connection with the doings of the company; though those who were supposed to be its members stoutly denied the truth of this supposition, being probably with the exception of their leader, really as much in the dark concerning the cause of the appearance and character of the old man as their neighbors.

It was on a dark night in July, a few days subsequent to the scene where we left our heroine at Martin's that the money diggers resumed their labors. Excited by the late assurances of Gow they came, one by one, stealing to the spot at an early hour, and, as usual, having kindled a small fire, and stuck a pine knot torch in a stump on the bank of the excavation to furnish light for their operations, they waited with nervous impatience for the appearance of their leader to direct the spot on which their efforts were now to be bestowed. The latter soon made his appearance; and, after giving his directions with the mysterious gravity with which he had sustained his part through the whole enterprise, and seeing them fairly at work, he soon informed them that, from the experiments he had been making through the day, he had strong hopes of arriving at the treasure in the course of a few hours, and that he should remain with them till the close of their labors for the night. This thrilling announcement added fresh ardor to their exertions, and wrought up their minds to the highest pitch of expectation and excitement. And, in imagination, new farms were already purchased, old ones richly stocked and improved, new houses built and furnished, wives were rustling in their new silk gowns; tables were groaning with dainties, and hundreds were lavished with a free hand in treats by embryo captains of militia or justices of peace

*The counterfeit bills with which the celebrated Stephen Burroughs once flooded the country were at that day denominated SNAGS.

on the occasion of their promotion, honors which their great wealth would certainly bring to them. Thus with lusty blows and many a gleeful joke they delved on till about midnight.

Gow now made another trial with his rods; and after assaying them some time from different points, with great seeming carefulness and accuracy, he rose with a satisfied air, and hastily throwing them aside as things whose aid was no longer required, he joyfully announced to his associates that the hour which was to crown their labors with success was at last arrived, but that it was the hour likewise that would, very probably, put all their prudence and fortitude to the severest trial; for he must now apprise them that in those cases where any murder or other great wickedness had been committed in connection with secreting a treasure, there was generally considerable difficulty in securing it, even after it was fairly discovered, owing to the strange sights and noises which were seen and heard about the time of reaching and attempting to seize it. But the sounds or apparitions, as startling and terrible as they might seem, would hurt nobody, nor prevent securing the money, if no attention was paid to them; while, if the attention at that critical moment was suffered to be diverted, and the eye withdrawn from the spot, the money some how or other was almost sure to get away, or be so lost sight of, that it could not be found again without a new course of digging and experiments. This to be sure, might not be the case where any such difficulty would occur, but it is always best to be prepared for the worst; and therefore, the instant it was announced that the money was reached every man must have all his senses about him, and confine them to the spot; and on no account look off or suffer a glance, or thought, to stray to what might be doing around him, but grapple at the treasure as soon as it was laid open, in whatever shape it be found, and hang on for life, though the very devils might be yelling about his ears. With this startling caution he ordered the men to dig away the inequalities of the bottom, and level off a broad space where they had last been digging. With nerves agitated by fear and expectation they hurriedly went to work, and soon smoothed down a space sufficiently broad to meet the mind of their leader. He then formed them in a circle around him, and taking a heavy crow-bar, and ordering every eye to be fixed intensely on the spot when he should strike, and if any signs of hitting the money followed, to dig for their lives, he lifted high the heavy weapon and thrust it deep into the ground. A sharp, grating sound, as of the deadened clinking of metals under ground, followed the blow. And a low, eager, suppressed shout of exultation simultaneously escaped

from the lips of all the company: while almost at the same instant a deep unearthly groan issued from the nearest thicket striking the ear with horrible distinctness, and causing every heart to quake with apprehension. Gow quickly repeated his blow, and it was again followed by the same cheering sound from the earth, and the same and still more startling groan from the thicket.

'Now dig!—dig for your very lives!' sternly exclaimed Gow. Rallying their sinking courage at the command, they fell furiously to work, throwing the earth in every direction by their vague and random blows, and seemingly trying to stifle their fears by the desperate energy of their efforts, as nearer and more terrific grew the fearful sounds around them. Still managing, however, to keep their eyes on the work, though scarcely able to control the movements of their shaking and quaking limbs, they soon laid bare what they took to be the iron chest containing their prize.

'The lid! the lid! seize and raise the lid!' cried Gow, 'and every eye upon the spot!' So saying he seized a bar and thrusting it under the supposed lid, raised one side of it several inches from its bed, when the sight of rusty dollars beneath dimly glittering in public light of their torch greeted their enraptured sight. 'There! there it is!' shouted the men, 'up with the lid then, and seize it!' cried Gow. One of them accordingly grappled with the lid and had raised it nearly upright, when in the act of stooping, involuntarily casting a look through his arms back on the bank behind them he gave a shriek of terror which turned all eyes to the spot indicated by his wild gestures. On the bank above them at a few yards distant stood an apparition which made the blood curdle in their veins. The figure of an old man, his head and arms bare, and his long hair of milky whiteness streaming down over his shoulders, one of his skeleton arms thrown aloft, and the other pointing to his bloody throat which seemed to be cut from ear to ear; while from his sunken sockets his eyes shone like two burning coals, and from his mouth a blue flame appeared to issue, showing long rows of spike fashioned teeth glowing like red hot iron.

'Seize the money!' vociferated Gow, at the same time plunging his hands under the lid. Partially roused by the words of their leader the appalled and horror-struck men were making a confused motion to follow his example, and some of them made a grasp at the money, when the apparition seizing their torch and whirling it wide into the bushes, leaped with a hideous screech directly upon them. Tumbling one over another, in the darkness and confusion, all but Gow sprang wildly up the bank and fled from the spot like frightened sheep from

beneath the crash of a falling thunder-bolt; some running against trees which threw them back, stunned and nearly senseless on the ground by the shock; some tumbling over logs and then laying in breathless stillness, and some fleeing and hiding themselves in distant thickets till his infernal majesty, as they verily believed him, should be pleased to take his departure. All was now dark and silent as the tomb. Gow however, who had fearlessly remained on the spot, either because he had more nerve than his associates, or because he was better acquainted with his majesty, soon found his way to the decayed fire kept for lighting up a fresh knot, proceeded to the spot from which the company had been so strangely driven, and put things in such a situation as best comported with his purposes. After which he began to call loudly to his men to return, as the ghost, or whatever it was that had spoiled their game, was gone, and there was no further danger he assured them of his appearing that night. One by one the men came creeping cautiously and stealthily from their hiding places; and all at length were again assembled on the bank of excavation. When after being a little reassured by the words of their leader and the presence of one another, they all proceeded to the spot where they had last seen the supposed chest, but no appearance of either chest or money remained, and a little loose earth gave the only indication of the spot where they had discovered it. 'The game is all up for to-night as I supposed,' observed Gow after thrusting down a stick a few times. 'The game is up for this time, and now you see what you have lost by not attending to my cautions, and keeping better command of yourselves when it was all nothing but an empty apparition—the mere shadow of some old codger that has been dead and rotten these hundred years, and that could have neither hurt or been felt by any body.'

'Dont know zactly bout that Captin, interrupted one—he grab'd my legs as I was springing up the bank there.'

'Yes and chased me like thunder way out in the woods, and give me a lick over the head that knocked me down as stiff as a tom cod, and here's the marks on't now, said another.'

'He came from a brimstone country, any how, for I smell it as plain as day—and seems to me I can smell it now,' observed a third, turning his nose around in different directions.

'How like a painter he bellowed and screeched it, jest as he jumped! I vow, it made my hair stand up so it shoved my hat off,' exclaimed a fourth.

'And what eyes! my stars, how they glared! if that are thing want the devil, then no matter,' added the fifth.

'Pshaw!' said Gow, 'all nonsense—this is nothing to what I have met with at such

times—and you will be convinced of it by the time we have had another such bout—but now let us see how much we did get.'

They then, proceeded to count the few dollars they had seized when driven from their hold on the treasure.

Gow and Martin were the only ones who were successful in fairly getting hold of any, each of whom had retained a single handful of bona fide dollars, amounting to thirty—of this there could be no mistake—for they were now spread before them, furnishing indubitable evidence to those who might have hitherto doubted, that money was here, and with proper management might be secured.

This cheering thought, together with the assurance of Gow, that there would be no difficulty in again finding the chest, and that these disturbances were always comparatively light after the first ordeal, raised their spirits, and as they sat around the fire with an occasional glance of wildness, eagerly handling and eyeing the dollars, they began once more to crack their jokes over their strange adventure, and again grow rich in the prospect of another trial for the slippery treasure.

Taking advantage of this state of feeling, and the renewed expectations he had raised in their minds, Gow now told them, as the first dollar of the money had been found, he was entitled to the hundred dollars from each, and that he expected their immediate compliance with the bargain.

To this, after some demurring, and a few manifestations of reluctance, they finally assented, and producing their money, they, with the exception of Martin, paid him on the spot. This business being adjusted and an arrangement made to commence operations again as soon as the situation of the treasure could be ascertained by experiment, the band separated for the night—the men to dream of devils and pots of money, and their artful leader to hug the reality of five hundred dollars.

Let us now return to the disconsolate girl whom we left sinking under the accumulated load of distress occasioned by the supposed desertion of one lover in whom she had centered her every hope of happiness, and whose image she had enwrapped in her very heart's core, and the fresh and deeply abetted persecutions of another, the object of her rooted dislike and suspicion, whose presence even was painful and perplexing to her feelings. After the interview at which May received the letter so astounding to her hopes and long cherished affections, Martin carried into immediate effect the preliminaries of marriage recommended and urged by his bold and determined associate. And the bans were accordingly published the next Sunday at the village, and the attendance of the minister bespoken to celebrate the nuptials one week from Tuesday evening next succeeding the

publication. May, in the mean time, the person above all others the most interested in this movement, had never been in the least consulted, but kept in entire ignorance of its existence; and never dreaming that any immediate advantage would be taken of a promise made on condition of a desertion which in her unbounded confidence, she believed could never happen, and which as she now suspected was artfully exacted by Martin with a knowledge previously received from some source or other, of Ashley's defection—or that any thing would be tortured into a consent which she subsequently uttered in her grief and agitation at the intelligence by which that confidence, as well as all her happiness was swept away at a blow, and wholly unsuspecting, indeed, of the measure which had now been taken, and which had made such fearful progress towards disposing of her to one she so thoroughly detested, she continued several days drooping in listless apathy to all that was passing around her, brooding over her griefs with feelings of anguish to be imagined only by those whose sensibilities have received a similar shock, or looking forward to the chill and dreary future, there to find no ray of consolation to compensate for the settled and heart blighting woe of the present. And it was not till two or three days after the event that she accidentally overheard in a conversation between her mother and a neighbor who had called at the door, that the intention of marriage between herself and Gow had been publicly proclaimed the preceding Sunday, and that not a week intervened before the fatal day fixed on for its consummation. The poor girl, as well as she might be, was petrified with astonishment, and filled with mingled emotions of dread and indignation at the discovery. As great however, as was her dismay at the dreadful fate which she saw preparing for her, as deep as was her indignation at the effrontery of Gow, and the baseness of those who had sanctioned his conduct, she made no outcry—uttered no word of alarm or reproach—questioned no one—called no one to her council, or even hinted that she was apprised of what was in progress; for where should she go for succor or advice? The friend and more than a friend, on whom she had all along relied to return soon enough to relieve her from her troubles before any measures of actual compulsion should be used, had now cruelly deserted, and left her unsupported in heart, and friendless and unprotected in her extremities—the neighbors, if the delicacy of her feelings would permit her to apply to them, were indifferent or against her, or at best would have no power to relieve her—and her parents who should be her friendly advisers and protectors, she well knew, were, instead, the abettors, if not the prime movers of all that had been done. She

saw at a glance how she had been entrapped—how the advantage she had unwittingly given them had been seized on as a pretended excuse for the steps they had taken; and she could easily foresee that this would furnish them with the same plea, as false, hypocritical and base, as their consciences must tell them it was, for forcing her on till she was irretrievably bound in by their toils. And although she knew not half their business and treachery, she yet knew enough to fill her with dread for the result of their machinations, and cause her nearly to despair of being able to extricate herself from the snares by which they had beset her. And yet she, at times, looked on the fate that now seemed rapidly approaching, dreaded as it had been, and still was, to her sober reflection, with an indifference and apathy of feeling, which one week before would have astonished even herself.—There was a strange wayward feeling that occasionally came mingling in the perturbed tumult of her mind, and seemed half to court the very fate she would avoid. Why should she care now, it said, what became of her? life was now forever a blank to her, and no happiness was to be saved by avoiding her doom. And offended pride then resentfully threw in her plea, 'He might have saved all this—he has cruelly deserted me in the hour of need, and that desertion, besides withering my heart to its core, has thrown me into the snares of a villain. How the thought, when he hears of my fate, will sharpen the stings of conscience that must goad him for his conduct. But what will he care now for the wretched, wretched girl? and her tears streamed afresh at the sickening answer her mind desparingly responded. 'Destroy thyself,' whispered the tempter. Starting at the obtruding thought, she fell on her knees, and prayed to her God to banish these dreadful feelings from her bosom, and implored his divine assistance in snatching her from the threatening peril, and restoring her tranquillity. She arose meek and calmed from the devotion and took her bible, there to find some balm for her bruised spirit. She opened upon a paper on which she recollects some time before to have penned a sentiment and left it unfinished while hesitating in the choice of a word. Her attention immediately became riveted on the writing. The words were repeated below on the same paper, and in her own hand apparently with the lacking word supplied. When could I have done this? she asked herself in surprise.—And that word too, which I could not recall—that is here—it cannot be, and yet it is my own hand. She cast her eye still further down, where she had written her name *May Martin*. This also she remembered to have done once; but here it was repeated a dozen times, and last of all was written *May*

Gow. I never coupled those two names together! she exclaimed, starting up, while a flash of light broke in on her mind that made her clasp her hands for joy. The bible had, till within a day or two, lain on the window in a room where Gow had often been also—pen and ink were always there—he must have done it, and for the purpose of learning to counterfeit her hand, and how well he had succeeded! But if he could do this, why not have written the letter she had received purporting to be from Ashley—he did, he did! As this rapid process ran through her mind, to the conclusion, she flew to the pretended letter from Ashley; compared all the little peculiarities of the hand to the writing just discovered and doubted no longer. It is, it is so! He did write me—Martin gave the villain the letter, and he kept it, and by it counterfeited the hand in the letter they gave me! Oh! a mountain is off my heart! Ashley, my dear Ashley, is still faithful! Oh, how could I ever have doubted him! But I will now live—now save myself for him—in spite of them all I will do it, and hesitate no longer about exposing this wretch, and bringing him to punishment. Such were the exclamations of May as she paced the room in a delirium of joy. It was her first thought to write immediately to her lover, as she seized a sheet for the purpose, but a second thought suggested that the real letter might, after all, have contained something similar to what she had received, or at least something, which, if she had it, would materially vary what she was about to write, and that she had better defer her purpose till she thought over the possibilities of obtaining it. She reasoned that the letter was still in existence, as Gow would keep it, thinking he might have occasion to counterfeit the hand again in the prosecution of his designs—that he probably would not carry it about his person, for fear of losing or accidentally exposing it, and that it was doubtless now in his cabin in the woods and most likely left unconcealed, as she had gathered from various intimations that he stayed there alone, and that no one ever presumed to approach his retreat. And having already pretty well ascertained that the employment of Gow and his associates in the woods was that of digging for money, or precious ores, which she supposed he had persuaded them to believe could be found there, and knowing that he must necessarily be absent from his cabin whenever they were engaged in digging, which, from Martin's going and return, she had learned was the first part of the night, she, not thinking of any one whom she could employ for the purpose, conceived the bold project of going herself into the mountain by night after the family had retired, and attempting to get possession of the letter. But

how should she ascertain where the cabin or shanty was situated. In her younger years, she had often and with delight, rambled through the woods with her mates in search of nuts, or medicinal roots and herbs for the yearly supply of the family. She knew well the whole tract of the forest back to the mountain, and even a portion of them she had occasionally ascended; but how was this to enable her to find in the night a place, which was not known even to the associates of the man, who, from no creditable motives, she suspected, had thus carefully concealed this retreat? She knew not; but her discovery had given a new impulse to her life, rousing every thought and energy of her soul into action, and so far from yielding to the obstacle, her mind became busied in expedients to overcome it.

There was in the neighborhood a boy of about fifteen years of age, known by the appellation of shrewd David, the prefix of which was gained him by his uncommon sagacity and keenness of observation of all that was passing around him. Being the son of a poor widow by the name of Butler, who supporting herself by her loom and needle, and having no business for the boy except to take care of her cow and procure her wood, had left him mostly to shift for himself. And although bred in ignorance, yet for doing an errand, riding for the doctor in cases of great emergency, or going as an express on affairs requiring secrecy and prudence, he had acquired a character for great despatch, skill and fidelity; and as for finding a sheep or kine strayed and lost in the woods, or the more daring feats of seeking out the retreat of a mischievous bear or wolf, none was equal to shrewd David, for naturally intrepid, nimble and active as the squirrel which he delighted to follow to the tops of the highest trees, and crafty in expedients as the doubling fox, which with the keenness of a greyhound's sight and almost the fleetness, he often drove to the long eluded burrough; there was scarcely a rood of mountain or moorland in the settlement with which he was not familiar. Among others he had several times been employed by Ashley as an assistant in his surveys in the woods, and May had often heard her lover speak in the highest terms of the capacity and honesty of the hardy little woodsman.

As our heroine sat by her window facing the garden at the back of the house, her mind absorbed in devising means for accomplishing the object on which we left her pondering, her eye caught the form of the boy just described, sitting on a rock and fishing for trout in a brook which ran by the house just without the enclosure of the garden, and the thought instantly occurred to her that he would be a useful and trusty assistant in ef-

fecting the object she had in view. Full of this idea she immediately repaired to the fence opposite, and within a few feet of where the boy was sitting.

'Come trout,' he was saying to himself, as he sat so deeply engrossed in his tantalizing employment as not to have heeded the noiseless approach of his visitor, 'Come, come, trouty, I gives you a fair invite to be at my breakfast to-morrow morning; and I knows you're aching to snap at that worm, as bad as I am to have you; so out from under the rock with you in a jiffy. Well, now, blast your scary picture, I guesses I can wait as long as you can any how.'

'What luck to day, David?' at length asked May, hesitating to interrupt him in his soliloquy.

'Why!' exclaimed the boy, rapidly throwing the glances of his keen gray eyes about him till they settled on his fair interrogator. 'Why, Miss May! dog my cat, but you half scares me! What luck? O, not much—the flies are getting so thick that the fishes begin to think they can get their dinners at a cheaper rate than I offers them.'

'But you like the employment, don't you, David?'

'O yes, when they aint so dainty about their victuals—but rather dull music now—I loves better to be scrambling over the mountains with Mr. Ashley. When will he come back? but they say he aint a comin back ever.'

'I am sure—I expect—that is, I hope he will return, David,' replied May, blushing and hesitating at being brought so abruptly to the very subject she had at heart.

'Why, mother says he sent a letter about marrying another girl; and they all say you are going to marry that Mister Gow, that folks think is such a wonderful man, and was published last Sunday.'

'I have just heard that I was published.'

'Just heard!—now that's a good one, Miss May.'

'David!'

'What?'

'Could I trust you with a secret?'

'What secret?'

'Why if I wished to engage your assistance in some affair that I had reasons for keeping secret, would you try to oblige me, and keep it to yourself?'

'I mought, and then I mought not again,' replied the boy with a droll, shrewd, half serious and half joking expression. 'I jumps at the chance a month agone; but the fact is, Miss May, when I hears you are going to have that Mister Gow, I don't like you so well as I wants to.'

'Well, David, I don't blame you for it; but if that is all you dislike in me, we can be friends again at once; for I can assure you

I never will marry Gow if there is any way to prevent it.'

'Good now!'—exclaimed he jumping up with animation and throwing down his fish pole hard upon the rock; 'there! see that pesky trout whipping off!' he continued, in an under tone pointing into the brook.

'But why, David, should you care about my marrying Gow?'

'Because I hates him. You see I likes to know what's going on, and goes one day to the mountain and finds where they digs a nights for money.—Well, while I looks about there guessing it all out, down comes that mister with a switch in one hand behind him, and afore I thinks anything's to pay, gives me two or three tough ones right over my head, and says, now keep off you little hump or I cuts you into mince meat. But David Butler is not made of wood—he remembers and thinks. So I watches every thing, and soon makes up my mind that he's a black one, trying to fool the folks and get away their money—for I finds they've been round borrowing money, and what for is it?—they don't want it to make their potatoes grow, I guesses.—And what for is it too, that he wants to be alone there in the mountains, where nobody must see his place?'

'True, true, David, shrewd they rightly call you—I too have suspected nearly all this, and still know something besides of the fellow. And now will you keep a secret and engage for me? it is this same villain that I want you to assist me in defeating? Will you promise?'

'Yes, Miss May, I promises now, and what I says I does.'

'Well, David, I have discovered, as I think, that the letter you heard of was made up by Gow to deceive me and make me listen to his offers.'

'Zounds! I'd fix him. And Mr. Ashley didn't write any letter?'

'Yes I am satisfied he did, for Gow could have no other means of counterfeiting Mr. Ashley's hand.—Mr. Martin took the letter from the office and gave it to Gow, who, I feel very sure, has still got it and keeps it laid away in his place in the mountain. Do you know, David, where this is?'

'I guesses putty close at it. I thinks it is the old cave that Mr. Ashley and I once finds in coming over the mountain. I sees, almost every night just after dark a little glim of light away up there, just peeping through the trees.'

'Is there such a place?—that is doubtless it then. Now, David, can you go and get me the letter?'

'What! in the day time? he's always there, and won't let me have it.'

'No, in the night, when he is always with the diggers.'

'May be the old man's there—they do say,

Miss May, he's the old one himself, helping them dig money with the black art. I'd go for you and take a bear out of a trap, if 'twas as dark as a nigger's pocket, for I always knows how to fight such like—but the old one! I fears to go alone cause of he.'

'But if I would go with you?' said May smiling at his superstitious fears, but thinking it would be useless to combat them.

'You! you, Miss May!'

'Yes, David, I will go, and this very night, as soon as mother's asleep—they have not been digging for several nights past, but I overheard Mr. Martin say they were agoing to begin again to-night; and Gow of course will be absent from his cave. Will you come, go with me, and guide me to the place?'

'I goes,' said the little fellow plucking up—the old one never comes near if you be there, Miss May, and I fears nothing else.'

'Well, then, meet me at this spot to-night as soon as you see the light put out in mother's room; and though it is out of my power to pay you now, David, I will some day or other see you handsomely rewarded.'

'I works for pay sometimes, cause mother's poor; but I likes Mr. Ashley, and I likes you, now—and I goes just as well for likes as money.'

So saying, and gathering himself up proudly, the little fellow took his fishing implements and hastily making off as if his excited feelings were hurrying him away to prepare for the expedition.

'Don't forget to be here to-night in season,' said May calling after him.

'I never forgets anything,' replied the boy, increasing his pace.

Our heroine now returned to her domestic avocations in a state of the highest excitement, created by her newly raised hopes, and the thoughts of her projected adventure, and impatiently awaited the time set for the undertaking of it. It was her first object to obtain her letter; but although her great anxiety for its possession had prompted to this bold, and, to a female situated as she was, somewhat hazardous enterprise, she yet had other inducement to visit the cavern. She highly suspected Gow of deep and complicated villainy, and thought it not improbable that something might there be discovered which would enable her to unmask him; for if any of his deeds had rendered him obnoxious to punishment, she, in view of justice and public good, as well as her own wrongs and her own safety, was fully determined to expose him by every means in her power, believing this was now not only due from her, but the surest and perhaps the only way she could escape from the dreadful fate which seemed so menacingly impending over her unprotected head.

[To be Continued.]

For the Rural Repository.

Maria —.

A TALE.

JOURNEYING through the western country, I arrived towards the close of a beautiful day at a village lying near the interior of the state of —. Here, though the sun still formed a small angle with the western hills, yet feeling somewhat fatigued, and being much pleased with the romantic scenery around, I resolved to halt for the night. The village far surpassed in beauty those which the traveler generally meets with in his perambulations through those wild yet picturesque regions. Situated in a valley, it was hemmed in on all sides by lofty hills, gracefully decorated with trees; and as from the summit of these 'pillars of nature,' the traveler sees as it were, beneath his feet, the little cluster of small though neat cottages, and hears the busy hum of industry, he at once imagines it to be the 'peaceful valley'—the abode of contentment and felicity. There was something about it truly poetical, something that charmed the eye, entranced the ear, and filled the soul with the most delightful emotions. It was the very Arcadia of the western world, and I longed to revel amid its floral bowers, and start along its gay cascades.

Having taken some refreshment, I impatiently sauntered forth to take a more minute survey of this microcosm of superlative beauty. It was a bewitching scene, and a delicious hour to enjoy it. The orb of day, now hastening to his lonely retreat behind the far off hills, poured his last rays upon the tops of the majestic mountains tinging them with a golden hue, forming one of the most exquisitely fascinating prospects the imagination of the poet could conceive. Nature was arrayed in the flowery mantle of May, and her harp was tuned to the sweetest music. The bleating of the joyous flocks, as they gamboled o'er the mountainside; the lowing of herds returning to their folds; mingling with the song of the milk-maid, the murmur of the rivulet, the sighing of the zephyrs, and the merry carol of the woodland choir;—all formed a chorus such as angels themselves would have delighted to hear. I was spell-bound by these enrapturing strains, and, unconsciously seating myself on the thyme-covered banks of a puny rill that gently glided by me, I was soon wrapt in a delightful reverie. I imagined myself in a Paradise, when I saw the Loves, the Graces and the Virtues, all sisters and daughters of Heaven, hand in hand, dancing o'er the Elysian fields, joining their dulcet voices in harmony more delectable than ever came from the mouth of a daughter of earth. Feelings kindred to those which then beat in my bosom, must have throbbed in Adam's when he first beheld creation—when he saw Nature decked in her

robe of virgin loveliness, and erst list to the heaven breathing numbers of her newly strung lyre.

From these pleasing dreams of fancy I was soon—too soon—aroused by the gentle tolling of the village bell. Starting up I wended my way back to ascertain the cause of it. I had not proceeded far before I discovered that it was the knell of a departed spirit; and quickening my footsteps I reached the churchyard just as the funeral procession entered its hallowed confines. The coffin, resting upon a bier, was borne by four young men, apparently but lately arrived at the state of manhood. Sadness sat upon the countenance of all, yet not a single individual wore the habiliments of mourning. Not a relative was there to weep for a lost friend—to pay the last tribute of respect to the departed, by bedewing the sod beneath which reposed the lifeless remains, with the tear of regret and affection.

I saw the once animated clay sink into the earth, to dissolve into its original dust, then, eager to ascertain who it was that had ‘gone to that bourne from whence no traveler e'er returns,’ I hastened to the inn, where I had before concluded to remain for the night.—There I learned that the deceased was a young married woman, a daughter of New England; that but one year before she was a blooming maiden in those congenial climes, basking in the sunshine of health, and enjoying the smiles of her parental home.—She had become the wife of a young man of her native state, a youth equally amiable with herself. Both were engaging in their deportment, and possessed of naturally superior intellectual endowments. They were indeed

A matchless pair,

With equal virtues formed and equal grace,
The same distinguished by their sex alone;
Hers the mild, luster of the blooming morn,
And his the radiance of the rising day.’

They were the very personification of our first parents, ere sin had soiled the fair leaf of their vestal purity. But where should they choose their Eden? The west had long occupied the attention of Maria’s partner, and he only wished to obtain her consent, together with her parents, and he was ready to emigrate. His wishes were at length gratified, and a day appointed to start. It arrived, and with a weeping heart Maria took a farewell embrace with her dear parents, brothers and sisters, and the loved companions of her childhood, then bid forever adieu to her native home.

Their journey though long was pleasant, and they safely reached their intended place of abode—the romantic village I have before described. There they intended to pass the residue of their sublunary days, in quietude and matrimonial enjoyment, and oh! that it might have been so. But alas! how different the sequel from their expectations.

The sun may rise in splendor, and set in clouds; the morn of life may be fair, its evening dark and gloomy.

Charles Clifton—for such was the name of Maria’s companion—was, as I have before stated amiable and virtuous. Yet how often do we see that virtue, though a strong barrier, is not sufficiently impregnable to withstand the irresistible surges of temptation. The society in his neighborhood, was as is too often the case in that section of the country, a *melange* of good and bad—in general extremely vitiated; and occasionally mingling in it as he eventually must, he was exposed to imminent danger. Allurements to vice beset him on every hand, and though his will ‘inclined to virtue’s side,’ yet his passions, like those of the bard of Ayrshire, strong and imperious, at last led him into the snares of wicked indulgence. The fatal cup was proffered to him, he partook of its Upas beverage, and ere he was aware of it, became a frequent worshipper at the shrine of Bacchus.

The faithful Maria beheld with a sorrowing heart his woful condition, and warned him time after time to check his pernicious course. He as often promised so to do, and as often broke his vows. This filled her bosom with anguish, and caused her to sigh bitterly for his fate and her own. Frequently might she be seen at midnight, sitting beside her cold hearth, quietly waiting for him to return from his sinful revels, while the tears flowed in copious rills down her grief-worn cheeks, and she seemed sunk in the lowest depths of despondency.

Time passed on for a few months, while his passion for drinking grew stronger and stronger, and as intemperance is the mother of other and, if possible, still greater evils, the reader will not be surprised when told that he soon became a gambler. Alas! when once intemperance has firmly grasped his victim, when his fearful coil is entwined around his heart, who can tell into what miserable state that hapless being may be led.—How many a once bright and promising youth, has become a prey to the cursed wiles of this artful friend, and fallen in the radiant morn of existence, from the summit of honor and respectability into the gulf of infamy and ruin.—Such was the fate of Charles Clifton. Once the fond hope and comfort of his parents, the pride and joy of his numerous friends; he had now become the most wretched being imaginable.

Maria beheld his condition in all its appalling features. She saw that the sun of their prosperity and happiness had now set—forever set. The last faint taper of hope was extinguished in her soul, and horror and despair closed the portals of her heart against every ray of consolation. Her ill-fated husband, now past being reclaimed, went on

from one state of degradation and crime to another, till he was at length detected in passing counterfeit money, and sentenced to the State Prison for life.

Lonely, dejected and forlorn, she was now left as it were alone in the wilderness, of life, without a solitary star to illuminate her darksome way. The kind attention of a few friends could not soothe her afflictions.—Disease soon took his seat in her vitals, and rapidly hastened the approach of death. He came;—and ere a month had flown on the swift pinions of Time, since her husband’s doleful sentence, she was quietly reposing in the bosom of the earth.

Thus was related to me the sequel of Maria’s life.—Afar from the home of her youth, with no loved kindred near, to pour the balm of consolation into her wounded heart, she withered away like an isolated flower, snatched from the parent stem.

J. C.

MISCELLANY.

The real Vulgarity of America.

The manners of the wealthy classes depend, of course, upon the character of their objects and interests; but they are not, on the whole, as agreeable as those of their less opulent neighbors. The restless ostentation of such as live for grandeur and show, is vulgar, as I have said, the only vulgarity to be seen in this country. Nothing can exceed the display of it at watering places. At Rockaway, on L. Island, I saw in one large room, while the company was waiting for dinner, a number of groups which would have made a good year’s income for a clever caricaturist.—If any lady, with an eye and a pencil adequate to the occasion, would sketch the phenomena of affectation that might be seen in one day in the piazza and drawing room at Rockaway, she might be a useful censor of manners.—But the task would be too full of sorrow and shame for any one with the true republican spirit. For my own part I felt bewildered in such company. It was as if I had been set down on a kind of debatable land between the wholly imaginary society of the so-called fashionable novels of late years, and the broad sketches of citizen life, given by Madame D’Arblay. It was nothing real. When I saw the young ladies trickled out in the most expensive finery, flirting over the back gammon board, tripping affectedly across the room, languishing with a seventy dollar cambrie handkerchief, starting up in ecstasy at the entrance of a baby; the mother as busy with affectations of another kind, and the brothers sideling hither and thither, now with assiduity, and now with nonchalance, and no one imparting the refreshment of a natural countenance, movement, or tone, I almost doubted whether I was awake.—The village

scenes that I had witnessed rose in strong contrast—the mirthful wedding, the wagon drives, the offering of wild flowers to the stranger, unintermitting, simple courtesy of each to all; and it was scarcely credible that these contrasting scenes could both be existing in the same republic.—*Miss Martineau.*

Lost Camel.

A DERVISE was journeying alone in the desert, when two merchants suddenly met him: ‘ You have lost a camel,’ said he to the merchants. ‘ Indeed we have,’ they replied. ‘ Was he not blind in his right eye, and lame in the left leg?’ said the dervise. ‘ He was,’ replied the merchants. ‘ Had he lost a front tooth?’ said the dervise. ‘ He had,’ rejoined the merchants. ‘ And was he not loaded with honey on one side, and wheat on the other?’ ‘ Most certainly he was,’ they replied; ‘ and as you have seen him so lately, and marked him so particularly, you can, in all probability, conduct us unto him.’ ‘ My friends,’ said the dervise, ‘ I have never seen your camel, nor ever heard of him, but from you.’ ‘ A pretty story, truly!’ said the merchants, ‘ but where are the jewels, which formed a part of his cargo?’ ‘ I have neither seen your jewels,’ repeated the dervise, ‘ nor your camel.’ On this they seized his person, and forthwith hurried him before the Cadi, where, on the strictest search, nothing could be found upon him, nor could any evidence whatever be adduced to convict him, either of falsehood, or of theft. They were then about to proceed against him as a sorcerer, when the dervise, with great calmness, thus addressed the Court: ‘ I have been much amused with your surprise, and own that there has been some ground for your suspicions; but I have lived long, and alone; and I can find ample scope for observation, even in a desert. I knew that I had crossed the track of a camel that had strayed from its owner, because I saw no mark of any human footprint on the same route; I knew the animal was blind in one eye, because it had cropped the herbage only on one side of its path; and I perceived that it was lame in one leg, from the faint impression which that particular foot had produced upon the sand; I concluded the animal had lost one tooth, because wherever it had grazed, a small tuft of herbage was left uninjured in the center of its bite. As to that which formed the burden of the beast the busy ants informed me that it was corn on the one side, and the clustering flies that it was honey on the other.’

The Pressure.

A MAN who looked as if he might have been a merchant or bank director—perhaps both, was walking down Wall-street yesterday.—He seemed to be in trouble—his face was in

a continual frown, with occasional twitches of the muscles, indicating painful feelings, approaching agony. Sometimes he held down his head and cast his eyes on the ground, and almost stopped, and then he nerved himself with desperation, and walked on at rapid pace.

‘ Alas,’ said we, ‘ here is a man suffering from the pressure—here is one whom the tightness of the times has pinched till adversity stares him in the face, and he knows not what step to take next, poor man, perhaps he has a lovely and loving wife, reduced from affluence to beggary—perhaps he has an interesting family dependant upon his own exertions—perhaps—my reflections were interrupted by the approach of an acquaintance of the gentleman whose distressed appearance excited my interest. He walked up to him, took his hand with a hearty gripe, and in a voice which accorded little with his friend’s agonized countenance, asked,

‘ Why, my dear fellow, what the devil is the matter with you—have you lost all your friends?’

‘ No, thank God, but I’ve got on a pair of the cursedest tight boots that ever pinched a man’s toes—they are absolutely killing me.’—*N. Y. Herald.*

ANECDOCE OF BURNS.—Burns paid little deference to the artificial distinctions of society. On his way to Leith one morning, he met a man in odden-gray—a west country Farmer; he shook him earnestly by the hand and stopped and conversed with him. All this was seen by a young Edinburgh blood; who took the Poet roundly to task for his defect of taste. ‘ Why, you fantastic gomeril,’ said Burns, ‘ it was not the great coat, the Scorne bonnet, and the Sanquhar boothose, I spoke to, but the man that was in them; and, the man, sir, for true worth, would weigh you and me, and ten more such, down, any day.’—*Allan Cunningham’s Life of Burns.*

JAMES KNOWLS, of Point Judith, in the last war, lived in an exposed situation, near the ocean, and never went to bed without having his gun well charged by his side.—One night there was a violent thunder gust, which shook the house to its foundation. ‘ Husband, husband, screamed the wife, get up, the British have landed or the day of judgment has come, and I don’t know which.’ ‘ By gosh,’ said Knowls, springing up and seizing the musket, ‘ I am ready for either.’

ANECDOCE.—A Vermonter lately arrived in Detroit, and having concluded to remain here, offered his horse for sale. He took the animal up to the public stand, and after describing his qualities in the most glowing terms, concluded the recommendation by

saying that he could drive his so far in one day that it would take two days to get him back again!—*Detroit Spectator.*

The Rural Repository.

SATURDAY, JULY 22, 1837.

LETTERS ABOUT HUDSON RIVER AND ITS VICINITY.—A new and much improved edition of these popular letters has been recently issued by Hunt and Co. New-York, 141 Nassau-street. They were originally written for the American Traveler, in 1835, 1837, by Mr. Freeman Hunt, and have already passed through two editions, the one now offered to the public being the third, with additions and engravings. As the author observes, ‘ they are plain, matter-of-fact epistles; embracing a variety of geographical, historical, statistical, and other matter, connected with our noble river, and the flourishing villages on its borders;’ and a spirit of candor and liberality, highly creditable, runs throughout the work. It is a neatly printed little volume, handsomely got up in cloth binding, and one that we can cheerfully recommend, to the travelers in the numerous steam-boats constantly passing and repassing our city, as likely to prove a valuable and interesting companion. A few copies of the above work may be had at A. Stoddard’s Bookstore.

THE NEW-HAVENER.—The first number of this periodical, favorably known under the title of the ‘ Literary Emporium,’ and now essentially the same except in name, was issued on Saturday last, and will be published weekly in the city of New-Haven, by Wm. Storer, Jun. at \$2 per annum, *in advance*, or \$2.50 at the expiration of three months. The number before us contains many good things and is almost wholly original. May our old friend under its new cognomen meet with success commensurate with its merits.

Letters Containing Remittances, Received at this Office, ending Wednesday last, deducting the amount of Postage paid.

P. M. Comstock’s Landing, N. Y. \$5.00; J. S. Mannsville, N. Y. \$5.00; A. M’K. Greenport, N. Y. \$2.00; P. M. Kingsbury, N. Y. \$2.00; P. M. South Orange, N. J. \$4.00; P. M. Madison, N. Y. \$1.00; P. M. Chatham, N. Y. \$1.00; E. W. Esperance, N. Y. \$1.00; G. C. Brattleborough, Vt. \$1.00; P. M. East Lexington, N. Y. \$1.00; P. S. Gilson, N. Y. \$1.00; D. H. Luzerne, N. Y. \$1.00; W. H. C. Burlington Flats, N. Y. \$5.00; P. M. Byron, N. Y. \$5.00; J. J. Jr. West Topsham, Vt. \$1.00; P. M. Knowlesville, N. Y. \$2.00; E. C. Morristown, N. Y. \$1.00; J. B. O. Southington Ct. \$1.00; P. M. Marlborough, N. Y. 2.00; P. M. Albion, N. Y. \$5.00; C. B. Chatham 4 Corners, N. Y. \$1.00; P. V. Livingston, N. Y. \$1.00; M. P. Castleton, N. Y. \$1.00; P. M. Port Huron, Mich. \$5.00; M. T. Williamstown Ms. \$2.00; H. V. O. Whaling’s Store, N. Y. \$1.00; P. M. West Richmond, N. Y. \$5.00; L. T. Marion, Ia. \$5.00; L. D. W. East Clarendon, Vt. \$4.00; J. N. P. Charleston, S. C. \$1.00; M. L. Clermont, N. Y. \$1.00; M. L. Ware, Ms. \$1.00; F. M. Cabotville, Ms. \$1.00; S. R. Athens, N. Y. \$1.00; E. W. Richmond, Mass. \$1.00; P. M. Grangerville, N. Y. \$1.00; P. M. Milan, O. \$3.00; P. M. Berlin, N. Y. \$1.00; E. M. Porter’s Corners, N. Y. \$5.00; P. M. Madison O. \$5.00; P. M. North White Creek, N. Y. \$1.00; J. N. B. Lansburgh, N. Y. \$1.00; P. M. Milford Center, N. Y. \$1.00; C. C. Potsdam, N. Y. \$1.00; A. R. Jr. Bolivar, N. Y. \$5.00; D. H. Wilmington, N. Y. \$1.00; W. D. S. Jamestown, N. Y. \$10.00.

MARRIED.

On the 11th inst. by the Rev. J. Berger, Dr. Elbridge Simpson, of Ashfield, Mass. to Miss Sally Ann Groat, of Ghent.

DIED.

In this city, on the 6th inst. of bilious cholic, John, son of Solomon Wescott, Esq. in the 20th year of his age.

At Hamilton, Madison Co. on the 5th July, Mrs. Catharine S. Brown, wife of Edwin C. Brown, and daughter of H. P. Skinner, of this city, in the 23d year of her age.

At Great Barrington, on the 8th inst. Mary Cornelius, daughter of Silas Sprague, Esq. of this city, aged 2 years and 10 months.



SELECT POETRY.

From the U. S. Literary Gazette.

The Summer Morning.

'Tis rapture to hail the morning's birth
When heaven seems bending to greet the earth,
And the fresh breeze, warm with life sweeps by,
As a token of love from the crimson sky.
The moon has a mantle of silver light
When she walks with grace as the queen of night;
She's bright as the hope of my youthful day—
She's cold as the friends that have passed away.
But thou, sweet daughter of beautiful spring,
O would I could chant the fit welcoming,
Or number the graces that round thee play,
From thy first soft glance of dawning day,
Till thy heaven wrought robe is floating free,
And the sun has followed to gaze on thee.
The city may boast of its gilded halls,
Where Fashion presides at her revels and balls;
And art may compel the air to fling
Such streams of light from its silver wing,
As rival the monarch of day's proud glare,
But the sweetness of morn is wanting there:
And happier far I deem my lot,
To muse at will in this lonely spot.
This fallen tree is my chosen seat,
Where the violets bloom beneath my feet;
Around me the flowery spray is shed,
And the young leaves flutter above my head,
As they joyed in the zephyr's breath to play,
And sun themselves in the eye of day.
Oh while on the glorious scene I gaze,
My heart is warmed with the morning rays;
And fancies bright as yon kindling sky,
Where gold is blending with purple dye:
And feelings pure as the pearly drop,
That trembles within the daisy's cup;
And thoughts as calm as the airs that pass,
Nor bend a blade of the tender grass;—
O morning, well may I deem thee divine,
When such fancies, feelings, and thoughts are mine.

CORNELIA.

From the Philadelphia Saturday News.

We introduce to our readers to-day, the production of a gifted sister of a late lamented and distinguished officer of navy. 'The Wish' breathes the true spirit of poetry, and such as we should be pleased to welcome often to our columns.

The Wish.

BY S. W. PERRY, SISTER OF THE LATE COMMODORE

O. H. PERRY, U. S. NAVY.

On! where I yonder planet fair,
Through the wide arch of heaven to soar;
Or might her gentle empire share,
A mortal with a spirit's power.

Enrobed in train of silvery light,
Bedecked with many a starry gem;
Half hid in veil of ether bright,
And crowned with crescent diadem.
High on the feathery clouds I'd sail,
And glance o'er all the scene below;
And far on forest, hill and vale,
My glittering beams of light bestow.
The hoary Alpine tops I'd climb,
Where steps of man may never dare,
Where icy pillars rise sublime,
And hang my diamonds sparkling there.

Or wind through deepest glens my way,
Where silence dwells in endless sleep,
Or on the foaming craggy play,
Or through the forest pathway creep;

But most where youthful lovers rove,
When dew drops bend each flowery stem,
By rippling stream, or rustling grove,
My smiles should bless the scene for them.

And where the widowed mourner sighs,
I'd gently steal and linger near,
Win sleep to soothe her tearful eyes
Or all her lonely vigil share:

And say I've seen that distant grave,
Where her fond steps must never stray;
And where its dewy flowerets wave,
Nightly should beam my trembling ray.

To the lone sailor I would come,
Over the pathless, billowy deeps,
Where, musing on his far-off home,
His silent watch he pensive keeps.

For him I'd chase the midnight gloom,
The waves in sheeted silver spread;
For him the dancing spray illume,
And rays of soft effulgence shed.

When rushing winds are raging high,
And hoarsely roars the ocean storm;
And threatening sea, and blackened sky,
The wide and dread expanse deform.

My struggling beams should seek him where
His reeling bark is tempest driven,
Burst through the storm his hopes to cheer
And point his fainting trust to Heaven.

The Accepted Sacrifice.

'Give me thy heart.'

WHAT shall we offer thee, thou God of love!
Thou who didst build the heavens and mould the earth;—

Thou who didst hang the sparkling stars above,
And call'dst from darkness light and beauty forth!
From all the treasures of the earth and sea,
What shall we offer thee?

Shall we present thee gold and glittering gems,
Such as might wreath the brows of royalty;
Shall we pluck roses from the slender stems,
Such as in summer's graceful bowers may be;
And shall we lay them at thy holy feet,
An offering fair and meet?

Or shall we deck thy temple with the spoil
Of mighty cities, and rich palaces;
Strew flowers, fling on the altar wine and oil,
And pour around thee mingling melodies
Of lute and voices in soft harmony,
Breathing up praise to thee?

Or shall we bring thee treasures of the field?
When the rich Autumn fills her flowing horn;
The russet fruits the loaded branches yield—
The clustering grapes, the golden waving corn—
The flowers of Summer—the sweet buds of Spring—
Oh! which, which shall we bring?

There is a voice which saith: 'Oh, dearer far
Than all this earthly treasure ye can give,
The pure aspirations of the spirit are,
When in the light of truth it loves to live;
Such be our offering at thy holy shrine—

Our hearts, our hearts be thine?

Liverpool, England.

M. A. E.

From the American Monthly Magazine.

Rose for the Dead.

BY MRS. SIGOURNEY.

I PLUCKED a rose for thee, sweet friend,
Thine ever favorite flower,
A bud I long had nursed for thee,
Within my wintry bower;
I grouped it with the fragrant leaves
That on the myrtle grew,
And tied it with a silken string
Of soft cerulean blue.

I brought the rose to thee, sweet friend,
And stood beside the chair
Where sickness long thy step had chained—
But yet thou wert not there
I turned me to thy curtain bed,
So fair with snowy lawn—
Methought the unpressed pillow said
'Not here, but risen and gone.'

Thy book of prayer lay open wide,
And 'mid its leaves were seen
A flower with petals shrunk and dried,
Last Summer's withered queen,
It was a flower I gave thee, friend,
Thou lov'dst it for my sake—
'See—here, a fresher one I bring'—
No lip in answer spake.

Then from her sofa's quiet side,
I raised the covering rare—
'Sleep'st thou?'—upon her forehead lay
Unstirred the auburn hair,
And when to leave my cherished flower
Her gentle hand I stole—
That icy touch!—its fearful chill
Congealed my inmost soul.

Ah, friend—dear friend!—And can it be
Thy last sweet word is said?—
And all too late my token comes
To cheer the pulseless dead?—
Here, on thy cold unheaving breast
The promised rose I lay,
The last poor symbol of a love
That cannot fade away.
But thou, from yon perennial bowers
Where free thy footsteps glide,
Or from those shores of bliss that meet
Life's never wasting tide:
Yea—where beside our Saviour's throne
Doth grow the immortal tree,
Plucked thou an Angel's stainless rose,
And keep it safe for me.

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